

A VISIT TO THE TOWN OF SELZACH, THE SWISS OBERAMMERGAU

AN INTERVIEW WITH SOME OF THE ACTORS, AND A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE PASSION PLAY

BY MARIE WIDMER.

THE PASSION PLAYS
Selzach, a charming village resting at the foot of the Weissgstein and encircled by verdant meadows and forests of a wonderful bluish-green tint—such is the Swiss Oberammergau, the scene of the famous drama of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, will be represented every Sunday during June, July, August and September.

While the origin of the Passion Play performance is shrouded in mystery, based on facts similar to those connected with the origin of the Oberammergau performances, the purpose is, nevertheless, the same, and it is, therefore, not surprising to find the history of religious plays in Switzerland can be traced back to the early Middle Ages, when it was the custom of certain monasteries to represent the events of the life of Christ in pageant wagons on Easter Sunday. Simple as these Easter plays were at first, they gradually gained in value and importance, more details were added from the Bible and other sources, and the whole Passion of the Saviour.

A decline in the production of sacred dramas made itself felt in the seventeenth century, when the religious times, with their change from ancient to modern, exerted its influence on all theatrical performances.

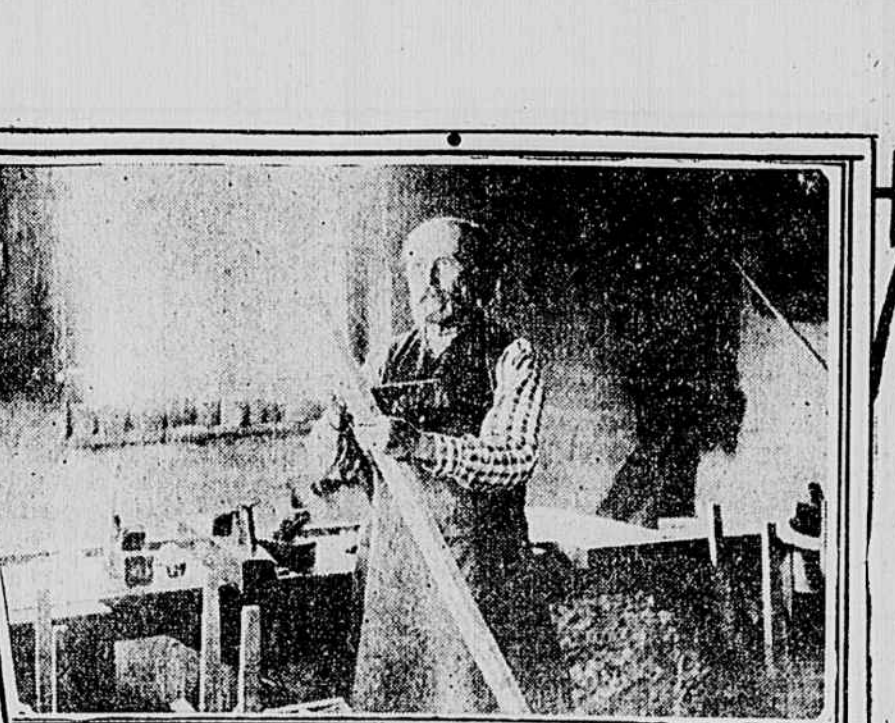
It was thus reserved for the then Bishop of Basel, at the close of the nineteenth century, to give new life to passion plays in the form



Passion Play Performances, Seizach, 1913.
This picture shows six juvenile performers.



Christ on the Cross.



This picture shows Joseph working at his everyday profession, which is also carpenter and cabinet maker, as in the play.



Farewell From Bethany

Switzerland. The inhabitants of Selzach—a simple and pious people—had for many years in the past been accustomed to devote the long winter evenings to the study and rendering of religious plays and oratorios, and when A. Schlaffl, one of the pioneers in the cause, went to Oberammergau in 1896, he was so deeply impressed by the extraordinary impression on him and his four companions that they resolved that Selzach, with its natural inclination to religious drama, could make a successful play in Switzerland. Numerous obstacles seemed, however, at first to make the venture out of their plans impossible and they only succeeded in 1892, when the local choral society

performed the beautiful Christmas "Oratorio," by Hering. With such an astonishing success that the villagers could be induced to attempt the study of the great "Passion Oratorio," by Rev. H. F. Muller, of Fulda. The first rendition of the same took place in the winter of 1833, and the results were again so unexpectedly brilliant that the music-loving ones could now be encouraged to set out for a still greater venture.

Its First Production.

The Oratorio was recently developed into a dramatic reproduction and the first representation of the same, which was divided into morning and evening parts, took place in 1895 in a spacious theatre, especially

ed for the purpose. The performances of Salazar now had a reputation which extended far beyond the sphere of the artist, the fervor of these simple actors and their devout love and intimate understanding for their noble task caused a kind of admiration to exist in the public. This was no longer a timid attempt of amateurs, but it was a performance offered by divinely inspired players. The representations, showing new improvements on each occasion, were again repeated and Salazar is now universally known as a person of the same caliber. In my personal acquaintance with some of the principal characters seen in the performance is undoubtedly a much coveted privilege, and I was therefore

opportunity that presented itself a few weeks ago to spend a few hours in Selzach.

Some considerable time ago the "Fassbergplatz" management issued instructions to the masculine players that they should refrain from having their hair cut thereafter, and it was thus a very pretty sight to see the boys of different age and size, all with flowing locks, and with a passion in their sweet young faces which betokened pluck, pride and a feeling of responsibility at the same time. All players, and there are now over 400 of them, deem it a high honor to be entrusted with the role in the performance, and it is their one and constant desire to show themselves worthy of their part by leading an upright and pious life.

met Franz Wiser—the Bartholomæus of the play, with a most remarkable characteristic head, and then downstairs in the blacksmith's workshop I saw Urs Biehli, the Judas, that much-discussed, ill-fated betrayer of Christ. Of athletic stature, with rough-looking red hair and beard, he was certainly a splendid exponent of his role, but the thoughts of this Judas do not err into such wayward directions, and his friendly smile was more than sufficient to dissipate any foolish prejudice which one might involuntarily have toward him.

At the Home of "Simon."
Passing a number of the "soldiers,"

And now to the play itself. It consists of two parts, a morning performance from 11 to 12:30, and an afternoon performance from 2:30 to 5. The morning presentation consists of a series of scenes, each showing incidents and episodes from the Old and New Testaments, also scenes depicting the childhood and ministry of Christ, the afternoon program represents the sufferings and death of Christ and His glorious Resurrection and ascension.

"Let there be light" is a strikingly beautiful representation of the creation forms the opening of the play. Then comes the story of Adam and Eve, the fratricide, Abraham's temptation, Jacob's dream, Joseph sold by

tered with such exquisite art and heart-
touching devotion that the audience
it will forever remain with those who
were present. After the great tragedy
of the crucifixion, the dazzling repre-
sentation of the "resurrection" and
"ascension" followed, a rare illustration
of what is embodied in the Christian hope
and a most impressive finale to this
most sacred of dramatic plays.

PULASKI

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]
Pulaski, June 31.—One of the most
elaborate social affairs of the season was
the banquet given on Monday night by
the Promoters' Council, No. 111, Royal Arc
Lodge, at Maple Shade Inn. Covers were
laid for 100 guests, which included the
served, and the guests were

PULASKI

[illegible]

Rev. and Mrs. C. E. A. Marshall and son have gone to points in Eastern Virginia to spend the vacation which has been granted the rector by the Episcopal churches here and at Radford. They will be absent from the city for a month.

Mrs. C. D. Kunkel entertained most delightfully this morning at her home on Fifth Street, North.

bride of her son. Mr. H. C. Kunkel, formerly Miss Hunter, and her guest, Miss Henry Cooper, of Alexandria, Va. Six tables enjoyed the game, playing on the porch and within doors, while varieties of roses and beauty spread their rich fragrance from every corner of the home. The guests of honor were the recipients of ivory fans and chains attached, while Mrs. Rachael Snider was the winner of the prize offered with the game, a pair of silk hose. A delightful salad course with ice tea followed by frozen, purple

Those who playing were Mesdames R. C. Kunkel, Henry Cooper, A. H. Jordan, M. K. Langhorne, J. C. Wyoar, J. R. Bell, J. Kent, Joe Eckman, John W. Eckman, Rachael Snider, John S. Draper, W. J. Harman, M. D. Langhorne, F. E. Bunker and Mary White, Elsie Howard, Haile Phelps, Mary Wyoar, May Pollock, Mary Ella Darst, Nellie Macgill and Sarah Bentley.

A party of young folk left to-day for the Robinson tract, where for two weeks they will enjoy camp life in the country. Misses Ellen and Ethel Stegar will be the chaperones, and their charges will include Misses Mary Shuff, Ruth Laughon, Mary Bones, Sarah Moore, Margaret Jordan, Mary M. Lee and Lottie Trollinger and Harold and Marshall Shuff and R. R. Moore, Jr. They went especially prepared to go into camp life.

BON AIR

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]
Bon Air, Va., June 28.—On Tuesday night the Cheanonda Camp Fire Girls entertained a party of young people at a well-kept apartment at the Grenawah cottage. The room was decorated with wild daisies, roses and carnations, and the tables were decorated with the Camp Fire Girls all over the world costume and the scene was most effective. The affair appeared to be one before the guardian, who presided in a dignified and camp fire sign, after which they gave the Wolshe candle ceremony, and sang several songs. Refreshments were served on the long porch which was lighted up with candles. Among the guests were Misses W. W. Robinson, Willis Vaughn, Lila D. Newell, M. Farland, Parrish, Gayle, Davis and Fred

The Guinea Fox Club, conducted by Miss Janet Talbot, has been camping on Sunday Hill for the past week, and returned home on Thursday after enjoying some of the best camp life. The members of the club include Charlie Tierney, Clarence Bennett, Ike Francis, George Priddy, Michael Moore, Vincent O'Donnell and Willie Barker.

Mr. and Mrs. Percy Glinn and family and Miss Carrie Pickett Moore have gone to Virginia Beach to spend several weeks. Mrs. Virginia Smith has as her guest Miss Appleton Jones.

Robert Arnold returned this week after a visit to Terre Haute and other points of interest in the West.

James Gilham, of Lynchburg, and Caro Lathrop, were guests in Bon Air on Sunday.

Miss Virginia Lee Miller will leave shortly for Cape Charles to visit Miss Nottingham.

Miss Harriet Cooke returned from Prince George County this week, after a visit to Mrs. George Run. Jr.

Edmund Berkeley, Sr. of Staunton, is visiting relatives here.

Russell Bargamin, who has been the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Christian, returned to his home in Albemarle on Friday.

Mrs. W. B. French and little son were the recent guests of Mrs. Burruss, who is suffering from the same ailment.

WLING GREEN

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]
Bowling Green, Va., June 28.—Mr. and Mrs. Barnett Ryland, of Kentucky, and Mrs. Charles Ryland, of Richmond, spent a part of this week with Dr. and Mrs. W. L. Broadus.

Miss Annie White has returned from

Major T. Dallas Coghill is spending some time at Ocean View.

Miss Ruth Glassoll has returned from a visit to friends in Louisiana. Mrs. Ione C. May, of Louisiana, spent a part of this week at the Lawn Hotel. Mrs. Blanch Walker has returned to her home in King and Queen County, after spending some time with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. R. W. Garrett. Mrs. R. T. Glassoll and Misses France and Louie Glassoll are spending some time with Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Williams, in Essex County.

Jealousy Slays Love

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By Nell Brinkley



Poor little Love lies sleeping the last sleep of the dead,
While tears and sighs and weeping storm on above his head;
For the breath of the green-eyed monster has singed him with fatal fire
And man and maid must shrink dismayed at the death of their Heart's Desire

Poor little Love has perished 'neath the claws of the Monster Grim,
And the lovers who should have cherished have wantonly murdered him,
For the doubts of the Jealous Monster first torture, and then conspire
With maid and man; for when doubt began 'twas the doom of their Heart's
Desire. LILIAN LAUFERTY.

LILIAN LAUFERTY